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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPAL](#) [KWBG](#) [JO](#) [IS](#) [IR](#)  
SUBJECT: A/S WELCH MEETING WITH JORDANIAN INTELLIGENCE CHIEF

REF: AMMAN 3954

Classified By: Ambassador David Hale for Reasons 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: NEA A/S David Welch met June 5 with Jordanian General Intelligence Directorate (GID) chief General Muhammad Dhahabi in Amman. Their discussions focused on Iranian intentions and activities in the region, Hamas, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. End Summary.

Iran and Hamas  
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¶2. (C) Dhahabi told A/S Welch that the head of Iranian external intelligence had recently come to see him after visiting Bashar al-Asad in Damascus. According to Dhahabi, the Iranian clearly gave the impression that Tehran considers itself to be the "guardian" of Syria (including President al-Asad), of the Shia community in Iraq and elsewhere in the region, of Hizballah, and of Khaled Mishaal. The Iranian argued that Jordan had never publicized past Hamas attempts to smuggle weapons through Jordan, and asked why the GOJ had now decided to publicly air its grievances against Hamas activities in the country. Dhahabi said that he had given his Iranian counterpart "a very hard time" during a meeting that went over six hours, and had emphasized to him that Hamas had to play by "new rules" given that it had formed a government and was no longer "just a movement." Past Jordanian silence on attempts by Hamas to stockpile weapons in Jordan, send Jordanians to Syria "for training," and infiltrate the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood would now be dealt with forcefully by the GOJ and GID.

¶3. (C) Dhahabi said that he had firmly rejected an Iranian offer to arrange a trilateral meeting between Jordan, Iran and Hamas to try and resolve Jordan's complaints against Hamas. He stated that he had told the Iranian intelligence chief to "forget" such talks, or the sending of a Hamas delegation to Amman, until Hamas had revealed the location of all the weapons it had stored in Jordan. Dhahabi said he also asked why Tehran was so intent on protecting Khaled Mishaal, and warned that Mishaal was just "using" Iran and could not be trusted. Dhahabi told A/S Welch that Sudanese President Omar Bashir had sent his Foreign Minister, Mustafa Ismail, to talk to him and King Abdullah on behalf of Hamas, and that the Russian Ambassador in Amman had also asked him to "resolve" Jordan's issues with Hamas.

¶4. (C) Rather than being a unified body, Dhahabi said that Hamas had five different, and sometimes competing, parts: "external" Hamas (closely linked to Iran), the Hamas-led PA government, Hamas prisoners in Israeli jails, a West Bank Hamas, and a Gaza Hamas. Hamas had recently asked the GID to pressure Jordanian banks in the West Bank to provide loans to Palestinian Authority (PA) employees. Dhahabi said that he had refused the request on the grounds that it was a "private business matter," and had then advised the banks not to give

such loans as doing so could "create problems."

#### Iranian Nuclear Program

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¶15. (C) A/S Welch informed Dhahabi on the package of measures agreed upon by the P-5 plus Germany to address the Iranian nuclear issue. He said that the U.S. wanted to keep the package private so that Javier Solana could discuss it in Tehran; a more thorough briefing on the details could be provided later. A/S Welch stressed that while the U.S. hoped for a positive Iranian response, it was prepared to pursue meaningful sanctions if necessary. The U.S. and its allies were not interested in Iran's posturing about its regional influence, but would focus in talks solely on Iran's nuclear program.

¶16. (S/NF) Dhahabi replied that he hoped Solana would deliver a very firm and tough message in Tehran. He continued that Iran wanted to join the committee of six regional intelligence services on Iraq, most likely to seek the committee's "acknowledgment" of Iran's zone of influence so as to legitimize its control of southern Iraq. Dhahabi assured A/S Welch that Jordan thought this was "a very bad idea," and that Turkey shared this view. Dhahabi also rejected Syrian participation in the committee, as this would legitimize the SARG's support of terrorist organizations. Recent accusations by Syria that it was the victim of takfiri extremists armed with U.S. weapons by a neighboring country were "a joke."

#### Limiting Iranian Power

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¶17. (C) Countering Iran's efforts to expand its power in the region required two things, according to Dhahabi. First, Iran must not be allowed to complete its nuclear weapons program. Jordan, however, could offer little help in accomplishing this. Second, the U.S. and its friends in the region must try and "undo" Iran's developing alliance with Syria and Hamas. Bashar al-Asad was under the mistaken impression that only Iran could "protect" him from negative UN action related to the UNIIIC investigation of the Hariri assassination. Arab and European countries needed to dispel him of this notion, and make him understand that Iran also could not protect the Syrian regime from terrorism, the Muslim Brotherhood, Israel and other potential threats to its survival, he continued. In Iraq, the U.S. and others could work against Iran by pushing for a "true" unity government that would reject Iranian interference. The Badr Brigade, Dhahabi added, "must be disbanded."

#### The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

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¶18. (C) Dhahabi urged the U.S. to "strengthen" Abu Mazen, and said that the Palestinian President could be a genuine partner.<sup>8</sup> Dhahabi had also encouraged the Israelis to empower Abu Mazen ) "though we disagree how" ) and asked for their help in uniting Fatah while undermining Hamas so that Hamas would lose the next parliamentary elections. Israel must recognize that there are "bigger issues" in the region than its plan to unilaterally determine its borders, he said. While Israel might succeed in gaining "short term benefits" from its convergence plan, it risked "replacing Abu Mazen with Khamenei."

¶19. (C) Hamas was losing popular support, Dhahabi claimed, and was very worried that the proposed referendum on the prisoners' document would pass if put before the Palestinian people. Hamas was accordingly considering a boycott of the referendum in order to "kill it." Dhahabi counseled that international observers should be sent to monitor the referendum to give it added credence. Asked what would be the result if the referendum passed, Dhahabi replied that Hamas would be "forced" to recognize and communicate with Israel. If Hamas leaders do not abide by the demonstrated will of the people, "Abu Mazen will move against them."

Dhahabi speculated that Israel would be "comfortable" with former Palestinian finance minister Salam Fayad as the new Prime Minister.

¶10. (C) Dhahabi said that Jordan had not provided weapons to security forces controlled by Abu Mazen "because he hasn't asked yet." Israel, he continued, expected Abu Mazen to do "too much" without the necessary manpower and equipment. Dhahabi warned that Hamas and other Islamic extremists were trying to "use democracy to destroy the system from within." If Hamas succeeds in increasing its influence in the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood and new parliamentary elections are held, he added, Hamas would have strong support in the Jordanian parliament.

¶11. (C) Also participating in the meeting were Ambassador, SIMO chief, and poloff (notetaker).

¶12. (U) A/S Welch has cleared on this cable.

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